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Talking Points on New South Asia Strategy
SA DAS John Gastright - SACFO Briefing
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- South Asia is a region of vital and growing importance to the U.S. It's central to our efforts to win the war on terror, counter nuclear proliferation, and advance the causes of freedom and democracy worldwide. South Asia is also a burgeoning economic dynamo and high tech hub, with the potential to serve as an economic bridge linking together China, Central Asia, and the Middle East. India is the world's largest democracy; Pakistan is the second most populous Muslim state and the only one with nuclear weapons; and Afghanistan is a fragile, emerging democracy.
- That's why the U.S. is committed to building, long-term strategic relationships with our partners in South Asia – and why the Administration recently reviewed its South Asia policies in an effort to further broaden these relationships.
- We intend to broaden our strategic relationship with India by building on the base created by the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP). The new steps we are taking with India include:
 - Accelerating implementation of the NSSP.
 - Expanding the U.S.-India Strategic Dialogue to discuss India's defense needs, including defense cooperation and co-production.
 - Starting a working group on space cooperation.
 - Launching an Energy Dialogue, led on our side by Energy Secretary Bodman, to discuss energy security and civilian nuclear issues.
 - Reinvigorating the U.S.-India Economic Dialogue.
 - Responding positively to India's Request for Information (RFI) regarding Multi-Role Combat Aircraft (MRCA), with the aim of allowing American firms to participate in the tender for India's purchase of such aircraft.

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- Extending an invitation to Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to visit the U.S. and meet with President Bush in July.
- Our steps with India recognize the country's emergence as a global power, our shared democratic traditions, and rapidly increasing U.S.-India commercial ties resulting from India's transformation into a leading market economy.
- Pakistan has made extraordinary progress in the past few years, thanks in part to our political support and assistance programs. Prior to 9/11, the country was mired in extremism and allied with the Taliban. Since then, President Musharraf has taken a number of strategic decisions to turn Pakistan around, literally putting his life on the line in doing so.
- Pakistan's military operations in the tribal areas along the Pak-Afghan border – which have involved more than 70,000 Pakistani troops – have resulted in the capture or killing of several hundred foreign terrorists and militants, at a cost of the lives of over 200 Pakistani servicemen.
- Hundreds of other terrorist suspects have been arrested in Pakistan's urban centers, including leading Al-Qaeda figures such as 9/11 mastermind Khaled Sheikh Mohammad and Abu Zubaydah, and terrorists linked to Daniel Pearl's murder, the 1998 Embassy Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam attacks, and the 2003 ConGen Karachi attack.
- Our strategy is to press Pakistan to continue its military operations, especially in North Waziristan (where terrorist/militants fled to last year when forced out of South Waziristan by the army), and crack down on cross-border terrorist movements, and to ensure that the Pakistani military has the training and equipment needed to enhance its operational effectiveness.
- President Musharraf is committed to his "Enlightened Moderation" strategy, which, inter alia, calls for Pakistan – and all Muslim countries – to strike at the root causes of extremism by developing human resources through poverty alleviation, good public education, health care, and social justice. To put Enlightened Moderation into practice, the GOP is significantly increasing its expenditures on public education, health care, and development programs. In fact, Pakistan's expenditures on public

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education increased by 54 percent during the three-year period from 2001-2002 to 2004-2005 (from \$1.116 billion to \$1.724 billion).

- In his effort to push the broader Islamic world away from extremism, President Musharraf is promoting Enlightened Moderation abroad as well as at home. For example, addressing the Philippine Congress on April 19, Musharraf urged Filipino Muslims to “shun the path of confrontation, suppress extremism, and contribute to the socio-economic progress of their country.”
- In the past year, President Musharraf has presided over unprecedented improvements in Pakistan’s relations with both Afghanistan and India. The Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus link is a dramatic achievement – and one that can have a real impact on the lives of average Kashmiris. Musharraf is taking bold, politically and personally risky steps to push forward Indo-Pak reconciliation. At last week’s cricket summit, he spoke publicly of “soft borders” between the two Kashmirs – a major and apparently unilateral concession to India, which indicated his willingness to consider the Line of Control as a final international border.
- The U.S. and the international community are working hard with Pakistan to completely dismantle the A.Q. Khan proliferation network. President Musharraf clearly understands the importance of this. Pakistan has shared – and has agreed to continue to share – information with us and the IAEA that it develops from its own investigation into the A.Q. Khan network. We welcome the serious effort Pakistan is making, and are satisfied with Pakistan’s cooperation to date. We expect that cooperation to continue, and will use all the means at our disposal to ensure that this is the case.
- We also expect Pakistan to take the comprehensive and enduring steps necessary to ensure that it is never again a source for sensitive nuclear technology. Its recent adoption of an export control law is one step in the right direction. We are working with Pakistan to assist it in developing robust implementing regulations.
- We have made it very clear that we expect Pakistani national elections scheduled for 2007 to be held on time, and to be fully free and fair. This was a message that Secretary Rice emphasized to President Musharraf and the GOP during her March trip to Pakistan. It is a message we will

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continue to emphasize to the GOP, as we believe that democracy, liberty, and freedom are the best counterbalances to ideologies that feed hatred, extremism, and terrorism.

- The U.S. and Pakistan are also cooperating more closely in international forums. In October 2004, at our urging and despite its concerns as a “non-recognized” nuclear power, Pakistan – then a Security Council member – dropped its objections to U.N. Security Council Resolution 1540 (on preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-state actors), allowing for its unanimous adoption. In March, at U.S. request, Pakistan withdrew a proposed amendment to the draft Nuclear Terrorism Convention, facilitating swift U.N. adoption of this presidential priority item. In April, once again at our request, Pakistan abstained on our resolution on the human rights situation in Cuba at the U.N. Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) – a major concession given the country’s long-standing position of always voting “no” on single-country UNCHR resolutions. (The Cuba resolution was narrowly passed. Had Pakistan instead voted “no,” this very well could have led other countries to follow suit and thus have tipped the balance in a losing direction.)
- The 9/11 Commission recommended that the United States “should make the long-term commitment to the future of Pakistan... so long as Pakistan’s leaders remain willing to make difficult choices of their own.” President Musharraf and his government are making these tough choices every day, and we must continue to stand beside him.
- Our long-term relationship with Pakistan is based on continued cooperation on a wide range of issues, including fighting terrorism and extremism, building a stable and democratic Afghanistan, countering nuclear proliferation, and bolstering Pakistan’s own efforts to become a modern, prosperous, democratic state. In recognition of Pakistan’s actions, the Administration is committed to further broadening the U.S.-Pakistan relationship, and is thus undertaking the following steps.
- We have reaffirmed to Pakistan our pledge to work with Congress to provide Pakistan with \$3 billion in military (FMF) and economic (ESF) assistance during the five-year period from 2005 to 2009, equally divided between the two. It is thus critical that Congress provide \$150 million for Pakistan FMF in the 2005 Supplemental, so that we have full funding for the first year of the pledge.

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- We fully support Pakistan's efforts to increase development and other forms of assistance in the tribal areas, and are in the initial stages of determining what additional resources we may be able to provide.
- On the security side, the Administration decided that now is the time to move forward with the sale of F-16 aircraft to Pakistan, in response to a GOP Letter of Request to make such a purchase.
- This sale again sends a very clear signal of our commitment to a long-term relationship with Pakistan, and strengthens the hand of President Musharraf and his government in supporting us in the war on terror and in continuing to make other, politically difficult, strategic choices. The sale will meet Pakistan's legitimate defense needs and make Pakistani more secure – which, in turn, will enable Pakistan to more easily take the steps needed to build a lasting peace with all its neighbors, including India.
- The specific number of F-16's we will sell to Pakistan and how they will be equipped remain to be determined subject to further negotiations and discussions with the GOP and a technology release review within the USG. However, we anticipate that the aircraft will be equipped with current technology, including in the areas of air-to-air and air-to-ground capability. The F-16's will not be equipped for the delivery of nuclear weapons. (It is also well-known that Pakistan has a number of delivery platforms already available to it, some far more potent than fighter aircraft, to deliver a variety of weapons, including nuclear ones.)
- Our steps will also not alter the existing Indo-Pak military balance. India holds a large conventional military advantage over Pakistan – and will retain that advantage even with an F-16 sale to Pakistan. According to Jane's, India at present has more than twice as many combat aircraft as Pakistan (911 vs. 417), almost twice as many armored vehicles (6860 vs. 3727), and more than double the military personnel (1.3 million vs 620,000). For 2004-05, India's defense budget exceeds Pakistan's several times over (\$16.5 billion vs. \$3.4 billion).
- We believe that the steps we are taking with India and Pakistan will strengthen peace, security, and stability in the South Asia region. As is clear, the steps are not "mirror images" – i.e., we are taking very different

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steps with the two countries. This reflects the fact India and Pakistan present different opportunities and challenges for advancing U.S. interests, so naturally our relationships with them have different emphases.

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